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FEB. - MAR.
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HENRY ALDRICH Comics
HOW TO CONFUSE YOUR NEIGHBORS

HENRY ALDRICH

"My costume for the dance should be at home now," said Henry Aldrich to Homer as they hurried along Elm Street. "Geraldine said she'd drop it off."

"What *is* it, Henry?" asked Homer.

"I don't know, but I'll tell you one thing, Homer," said Henry, stamping the snow off his shoes on the Aldrich front porch, "when the girls get together for a Valentine's Day Dance, anything can happen."

The costume had arrived and Mrs. Aldrich had put it up in Henry's room. "I'm as curious as you are, Henry," Homer said eagerly, when they got upstairs. "Open it up!"

Henry untied the string, and then pulled out a bundle of tissue paper before he discovered a pair of gauzy wings, and a gold-colored bow and quiver of arrows.

"What the . . . is this all?"

Homer went through the tissue paper and brought forth a satiny piece of bright blue material. "Look, Henry," he said laughing, "this completes the ensemble!"

"There must be some mistake," muttered Henry and he went to call Geraldine. But he soon returned with a crestfallen expression on his face.

"Well . . . ?" asked Homer.

"It's for me, all right," Henry groaned, "and guess who I'm supposed to be . . . *Dan Cupid*. D'you hear that, Homer? *Cupid!*"

"Yep," he went on sadly, "Geraldine is coming to the dance as Venus with a pink satin formal and a crown and scepter of imitation jewels. She says if I don't wear this outfit it'll spoil everything."

"Boy, am I lucky," Homer said, looking out at the snow that was falling again, "I'm only the King of Hearts, but at least I'll have some clothes on."

"I'll probably catch pneumonia for sure," chattered Henry.

Homer brightened up. "Listen," he exclaimed, "I've got it, wear your long winter underwear! Red will go fine with that baby blue. Very colorful!"

Later that evening, Henry got into his costume, and, as Homer had pointed out, it was truly very colorful. Henry had added a few more touches in addition to the long red woolens, all for comfort, of course. These were yellow earmuffs, black gloves, green argyle socks, and white tennis sneakers.

Right on the dot of seven-thirty, Homer showed up again at the Aldrich home in his father's car. And the King of Hearts and Dan Cupid set out to pick up the Queen of Hearts and Venus.

Homer was a good driver but the family car didn't respond the way the old jalopy would. Rounding the turn near Hillside Boulevard, he lost control and the car slipped off the road into a snowbank. No damage—but they *were* stuck.

"I've got a tow chain in the trunk, Henry," Homer said. "You go down the boulevard and get somebody to help us out."

Henry gulped, "In this outfit?"

"Well, all right, let's flip to see who goes."

Henry lost. He sat for a minute. "Homer," he began, "somebody's bound to come by. Why

(Continued on inside back cover)

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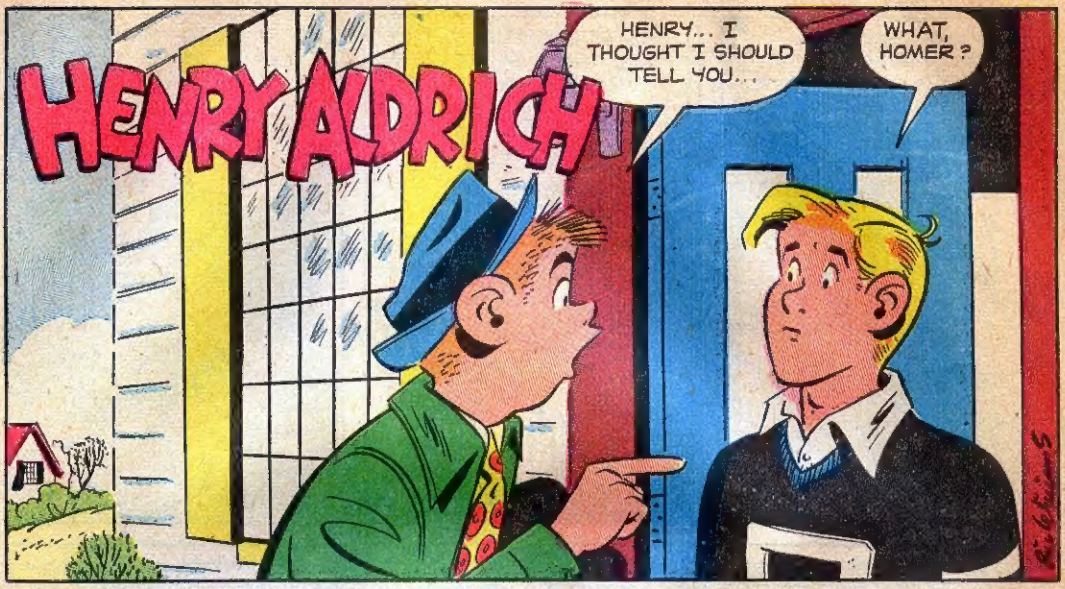
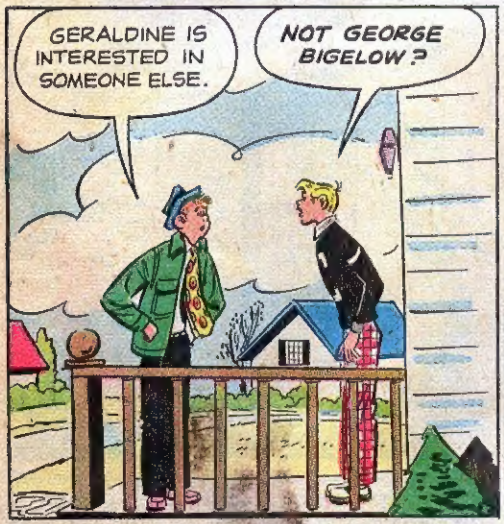
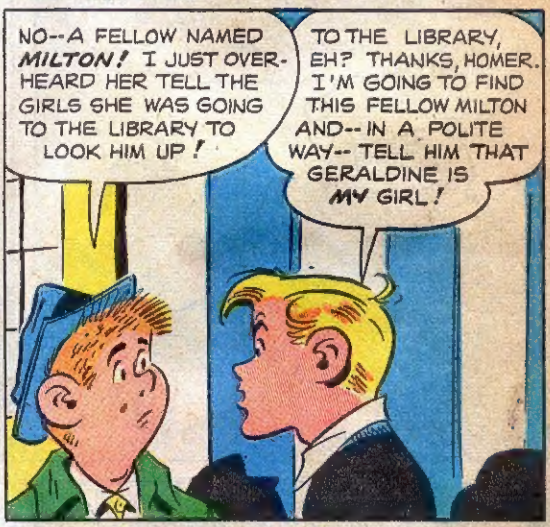

HENRY ALDRICH
HENRY... I THOUGHT I SHOULD TELL YOU...
WHAT, HOMER?


GERALDINE IS INTERESTED IN SOMEONE ELSE.
NOT GEORGE BIGELOW?

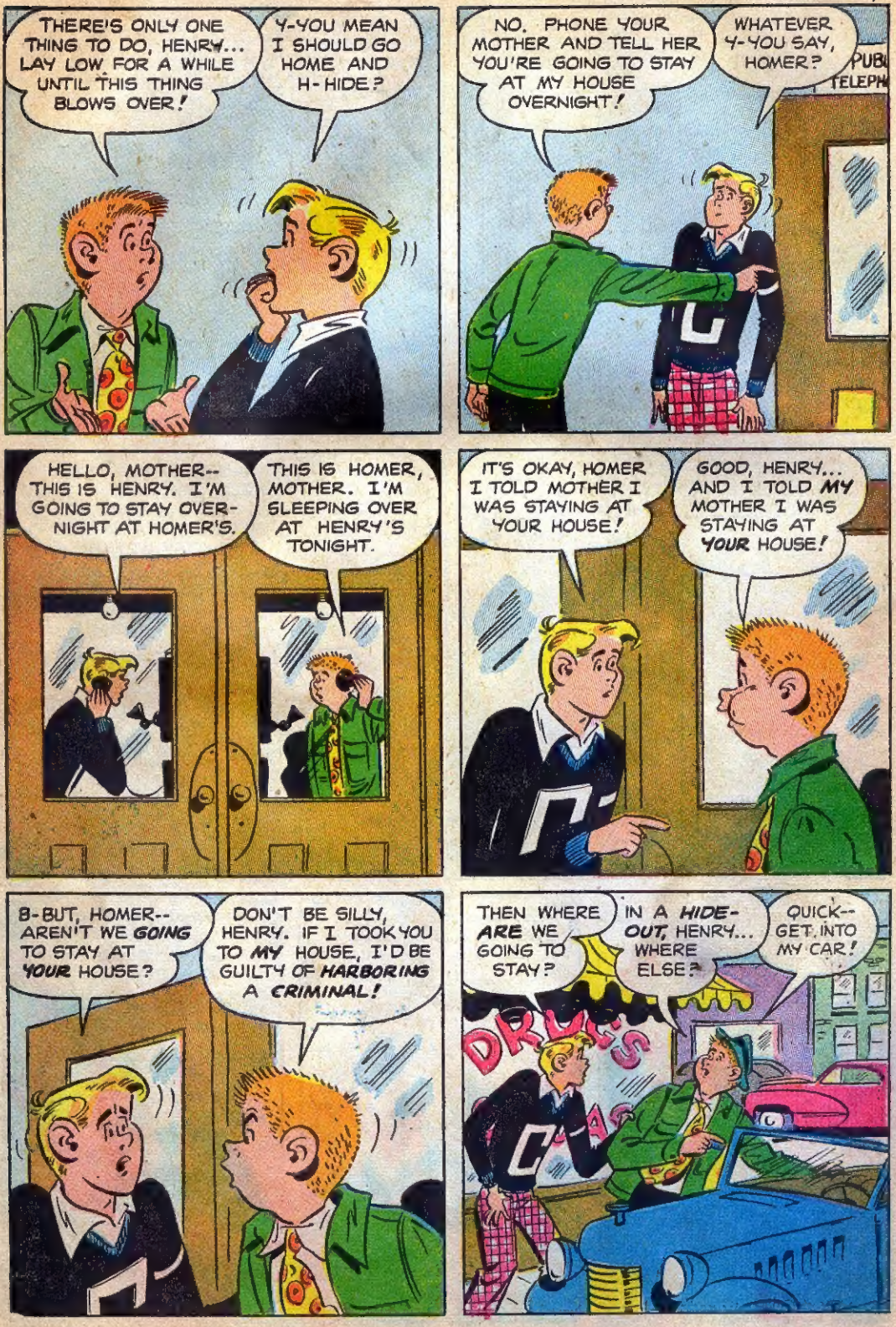

NO--A FELLOW NAMED MILTON! I JUST OVERHEARD HER TELL THE GIRLS SHE WAS GOING TO THE LIBRARY TO LOOK HIM UP!
TO THE LIBRARY, EH? THANKS, HOMER. I'M GOING TO FIND THIS FELLOW MILTON AND-- IN A POLITE WAY-- TELL HIM THAT GERALDINE IS MY GIRL!

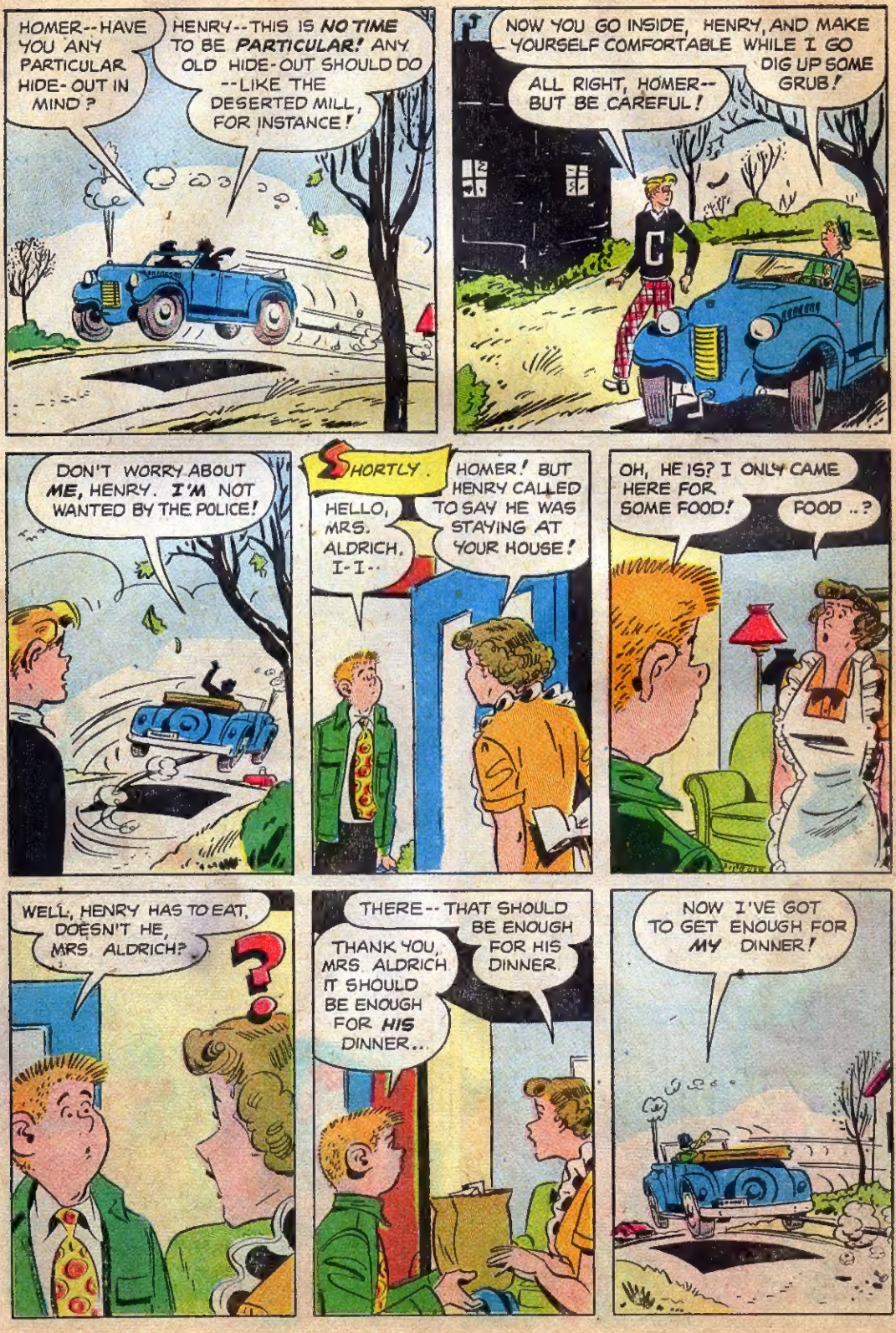
MEANWHILE...
CAN YOU PLEASE TELL ME WHERE I CAN FIND "THE LIFE OF MILTON"?
I'LL CHECK IT FOR YOU RIGHT AWAY.
ASST LIBRARIAN

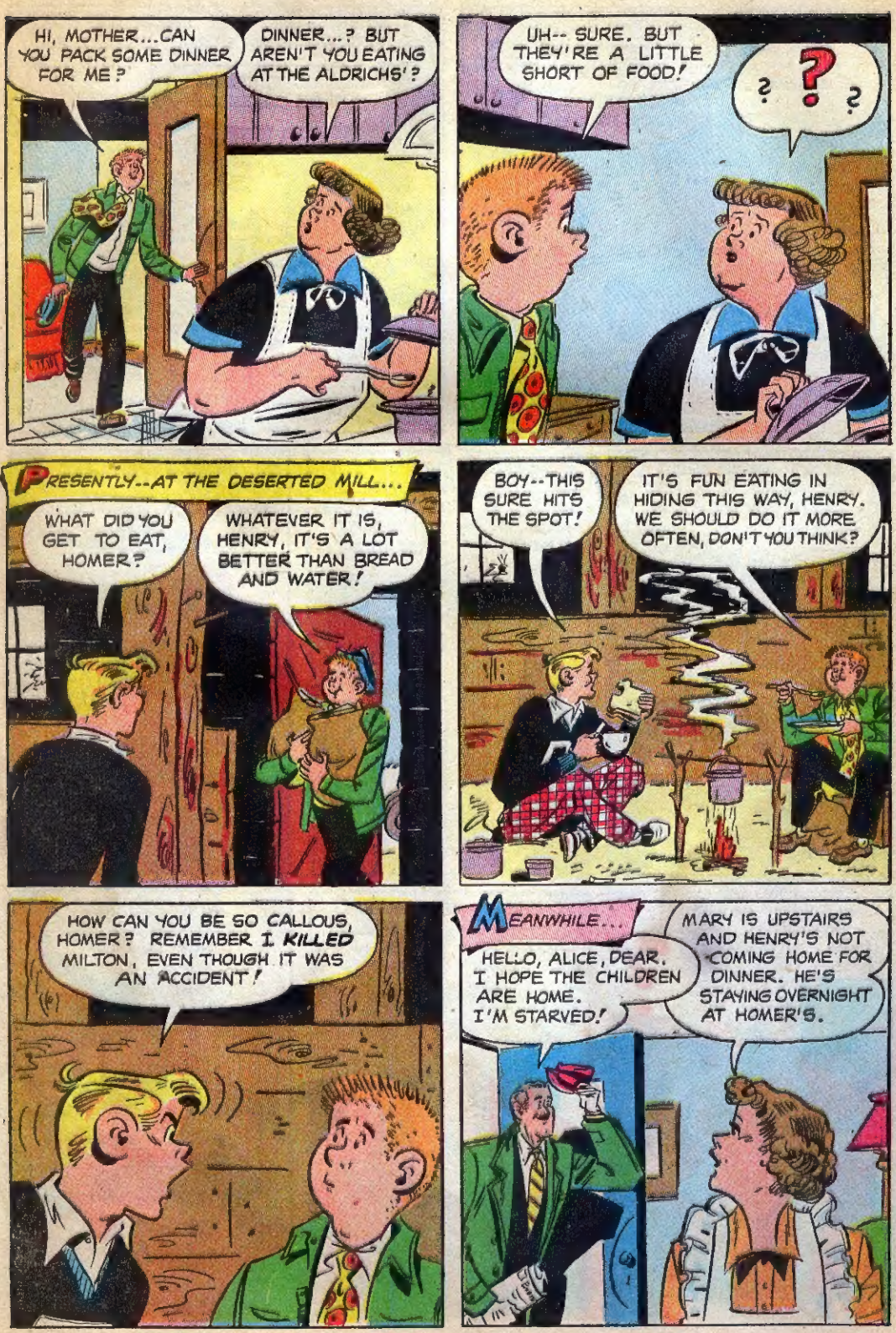
IF YOU JUST FOLLOW ME TO SECTION "C", I'LL HELP YOU LOOK FOR IT.
THANKS!
H.A. 10-522

THERE'S GERALDINE. . AND THAT MUST BE THAT FELLOW MILTON WITH HER.
I GUESS THIS MUST BE THEIR SECRET RENDEZVOUS!
IF I CAN CLIMB UP HERE.
OOPS!
GOSH . I WOULDN'T WANT GERALDINE TO FIND ME SPYING ON HER, SHE'LL NEVER FORGIVE ME.
WHAT HIT ME?
"THE LIFE OF MILTON"!
BESIDES. . ANY FELLOW WHO WOULD USE THE LIBRARY FOR A MEETING PLACE MUST BE A SQUARE.
. . AND SINCE A SQUARE COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE PART OF A TRIANGLE, I DON'T THINK I HAVE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!
CENTERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
HI, HENRY--DID YOU FIND GERALDINE WITH THAT FELLOW MILTON?
YEH, HOMER, I SAW THEM.

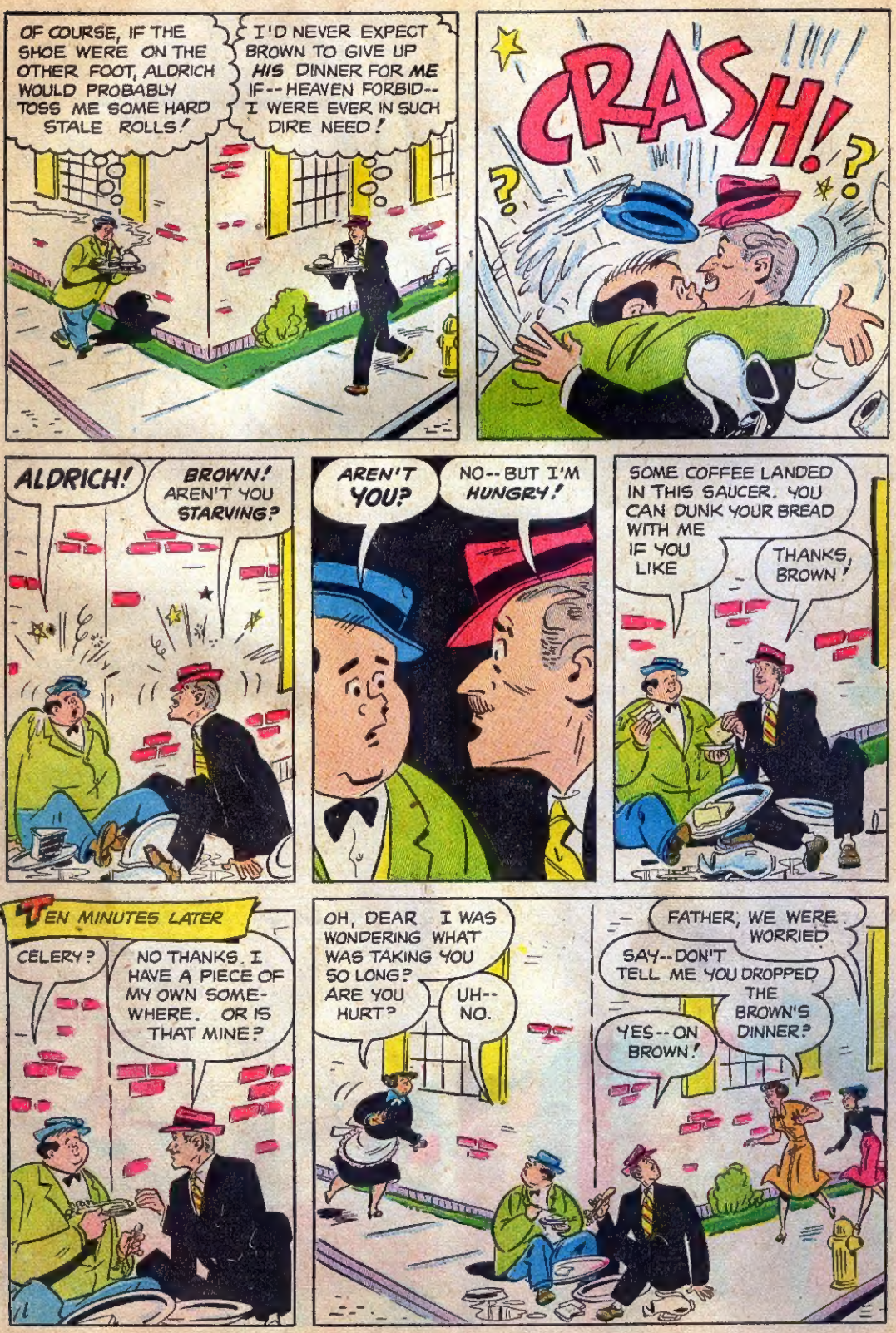
DID YOU HIT HIM... OR IS HE A BIG GUY?
I HIT HIM--WITH A BOOK... BUT IT WAS AN ACCIDENT.
OH, HENRY, I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU...
WERE YOU, GERALDINE? I SUPPOSE YOU CONSIDER ME BETTER COMPANY THAN MILTON?
I CERTAINLY DO! MILTON IS DEAD!
? ?
HENRY-- WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
UH--ONE OF HIS DIZZY SPELLS, GERALDINE. Y-YOU RUN ALONG. HE'LL BE BETTER OFF ALONE, SO I'LL STAY WITH HIM!
H-HOMER.. I-I-I KILLED MILTON!
SH-SH...YOU SAID IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, DIDN'T YOU?
DID ANYONE SEE YOU DO IT, HENRY?
I-I DON'T THINK SO.
HERE, DRINK THIS. IT'LL STEADY YOUR NERVES. IT'S STRAIGHT ROOT BEER!


THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO, HENRY... LAY LOW FOR A WHILE UNTIL THIS THING BLOWS OVER!
Y-YOU MEAN I SHOULD GO HOME AND H-HIDE?
NO. PHONE YOUR MOTHER AND TELL HER YOU'RE GOING TO STAY AT MY HOUSE OVERNIGHT!
WHATEVER Y-YOU SAY, HOMER?
HELLO, MOTHER-- THIS IS HENRY. I'M GOING TO STAY OVER-NIGHT AT HOMER'S.
THIS IS HOMER, MOTHER. I'M SLEEPING OVER AT HENRY'S TONIGHT.
IT'S OKAY, HOMER I TOLD MOTHER I WAS STAYING AT YOUR HOUSE!
GOOD, HENRY... AND I TOLD MY MOTHER I WAS STAYING AT YOUR HOUSE!
B-BUT, HOMER-- AREN'T WE GOING TO STAY AT YOUR HOUSE?
DON'T BE SILLY, HENRY. IF I TOOK YOU TO MY HOUSE, I'D BE GUILTY OF HARBORING A CRIMINAL!
THEN WHERE ARE WE GOING TO STAY?
IN A HIDE-OUT, HENRY... WHERE ELSE?
QUICK-- GET INTO MY CAR!


HOMER--HAVE YOU ANY PARTICULAR HIDE-OUT IN MIND?
HENRY--THIS IS NO TIME TO BE PARTICULAR! ANY OLD HIDE-OUT SHOULD DO --LIKE THE DESERTED MILL, FOR INSTANCE!
NOW YOU GO INSIDE, HENRY, AND MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE WHILE I GO DIG UP SOME GRUB!
ALL RIGHT, HOMER-- BUT BE CAREFUL!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, HENRY. I'M NOT WANTED BY THE POLICE!
SHORTLY.
HELLO, MRS. ALDRICH, I-I--
HOMER! BUT HENRY CALLED TO SAY HE WAS STAYING AT YOUR HOUSE!
OH, HE IS? I ONLY CAME HERE FOR SOME FOOD!
FOOD ..?
WELL, HENRY HAS TO EAT, DOESN'T HE, MRS ALDRICH?
?
THERE-- THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR HIS DINNER.
THANK YOU, MRS. ALDRICH. IT SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR HIS DINNER...
NOW I'VE GOT TO GET ENOUGH FOR MY DINNER!


HI, MOTHER...CAN YOU PACK SOME DINNER FOR ME?
DINNER...? BUT AREN'T YOU EATING AT THE ALDRICHS'?
UH-- SURE. BUT THEY'RE A LITTLE SHORT OF FOOD!
? ? ?
PRESENTLY--AT THE DESERTED MILL...
WHAT DID YOU GET TO EAT, HOMER?
WHATEVER IT IS, HENRY, IT'S A LOT BETTER THAN BREAD AND WATER!
BOY--THIS SURE HITS THE SPOT!
IT'S FUN EATING IN HIDING THIS WAY, HENRY. WE SHOULD DO IT MORE OFTEN, DON'T YOU THINK?
HOW CAN YOU BE SO CALLOUS, HOMER? REMEMBER I KILLED MILTON, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
MEANWHILE...
HELLO, ALICE, DEAR. I HOPE THE CHILDREN ARE HOME. I'M STARVED!
MARY IS UPSTAIRS AND HENRY'S NOT COMING HOME FOR DINNER. HE'S STAYING OVERNIGHT AT HOMER'S.

BUT A VERY ODD THING HAPPENED, SAM. HOMER CAME HERE TO ASK FOR SOME FOOD FOR HENRY'S DINNER!
WHAT?
THINGS MUST REALLY BE BAD FOR THE BROWNS.
PROBABLY WORSE THAN WE CAN IMAGINE!
I- I'M AFRAID I DON'T FEEL LIKE EATING, ALICE!
NEITHER DO I, SAM!
BUT, MOTHER... FATHER...THERE'S SUCH A DELICIOUS DINNER PREPARED!
THAT'S JUST IT, MARY...
WE'VE GOT EVERY-THING .. AND THE POOR BROWNS ARE STARVING!
OH -- HOW DREADFUL!
SHALL I DRIVE YOU THERE, FATHER?
NO. IT'S JUST A COUPLE OF BLOCKS... LESS CHANCE OF SPILL-ING ANYTHING IF I WALK!
I'LL OPEN A CAN OF SAR-DINES. HURRY BACK, SAM!
AT THE BROWNS -- THAT VERY MOMENT
SLIP A FEW DOLLARS UNDER THE WHOLE WHEAT BREAD. ALDRICH MAY BE TOO PROUD TO ASK ME FOR CIGARETTE MONEY!


OF COURSE, IF THE SHOE WERE ON THE OTHER FOOT, ALDRICH WOULD PROBABLY TOSS ME SOME HARD STALE ROLLS!
I'D NEVER EXPECT BROWN TO GIVE UP HIS DINNER FOR ME IF--HEAVEN FORBID--I WERE EVER IN SUCH DIRE NEED!
CRASH!
ALDRICH!
BROWN! AREN'T YOU STARVING?
AREN'T YOU?
NO--BUT I'M HUNGRY!
SOME COFFEE LANDED IN THIS SAUCER. YOU CAN DUNK YOUR BREAD WITH ME IF YOU LIKE
THANKS, BROWN!
TEN MINUTES LATER
CELERY?
NO THANKS. I HAVE A PIECE OF MY OWN SOMEWHERE. OR IS THAT MINE?
OH, DEAR I WAS WONDERING WHAT WAS TAKING YOU SO LONG? ARE YOU HURT?
UH--NO.
FATHER, WE WERE WORRIED
SAY--DON'T TELL ME YOU DROPPED THE BROWN'S DINNER?
YES--ON BROWN!

I RAN INTO ALDRICH. HE THOUGHT WE WERE STARVING!
HOMER LED THEM TO BELIEVE HE WAS HAVING DINNER AT OUR HOUSE AND WE DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO EAT!
IF I WERE YOU, I'D PUNISH HOMER FOR THIS!
IT WAS PROBABLY HENRY'S IDEA!
THAT'S NOT GLAZED FRUIT, ALDRICH... IT'S A PIECE OF GLASS IN THE FRUIT SALAD!
AS LONG AS YOU KNOW THAT YOUR HENRY IS WITH OUR HOMER, YOU HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!
I FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT HENRY!
THEY PROBABLY FELT LIKE CAMPING BUT DIDN'T WANT TO WORRY US, SO EACH SAID HE WAS STAYING AT THE OTHER'S HOUSE!
THEY CAN TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES!
HOW ABOUT SOME ONE TAKING CARE OF ME! AND PLEASE PASS THE KETCHUP!
IN THE MEANTIME.
HOMER.
YEH. ?
ARE YOU SLEEPING?
NO-- YOU?
CAN'T SLEEP. MY CONSCIENCE IS BOTHERING ME!
THERE'S A FLY BOTHERING ME!
SWISH!

HOMER, I'M GOING TO GIVE MYSELF UP!
HUH? JUST WHEN I CATCH THAT FLY AND CAN FINALLY GET SOME SLEEP!
SLAP!
I-I'M GOING TO THROW MYSELF ON THE MERCY OF THE COURT...
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, HENRY... {YAWN} BUT THROW YOURSELF TOMORROW AND LET'S GET SOME SLEEP NOW!
WELL... NOW THAT I'VE MADE UP MY MIND TO GIVE MYSELF UP, MY CONSCIENCE IS CLEAR, SO I GUESS I CAN SLEEP... {YAWN}
GOOD NIGHT, HOMER.
ZZZZZ
NEXT DAY--AT POLICE H.Q.
GO ON, HENRY--AS LONG AS YOU'VE MADE UP YOUR MIND, TELL HIM--TELL HIM!
ER--
WELL... SPEAK UP! I'M BUSY.
DESK SERGEANT
IF YOU'RE TOO BUSY, I'LL COME BACK ANOTHER TIME. COME ON, HOMER.
BUT HE'S NEVER TOO BUSY FOR HOMICIDE!
HOMICIDE?
DESK SA
Y-YES... I-I KILLED A FELLOW NAMED MILTON...
WHEN?
WHERE?
HOW?
YESTERDAY... IN THE LIBRARY... WITH A BOOK...

COME ON, MURPH-- LET'S CHECK ON THIS MURDER!
HENRY, DON'T FORGET TO TELL HIM IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
Y-YEH-- IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
WHAT'S THIS MILTON'S LAST NAME?
I DON'T KNOW. I WAS NEVER INTRODUCED TO HIM.
ARE YOU SURE HE'S DEAD?
Y-YES!
POOR HENRY...
MISS, DID YOU EVER HEAR OF ANYONE NAMED MILTON?
OH, YES!
LIBRARIAN
THIS GUY SAYS HE'S DEAD! DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?
UH--YES. MILTON IS VERY DEAD!
AND IF IT WEREN'T FOR ME HE'D BE ALIVE TODAY!
MILTON, THE GREAT POET HAS BEEN DEAD SINCE 1647. BUT, OF COURSE, WE KNOW NOW THAT THIS WAS ONLY BECAUSE OF A YOUNG MAN NAMED HENRY ALDRICH.
LIBRARIAN
YOU MUST WRITE A BOOK ABOUT THIS, HENRY I AM SURE THIS SURPRISING FACT WILL MAKE A GREAT HIT IN LITERARY CIRCLES ALL OVER THE WORLD!

MAKING FUN OF THE POLICE, HUH? I'VE GOT A GOOD MIND TO LOCK YOU UP!
H-HE'S FAINTED!
THIS'LL BRING HIM TO!!
GLUB! HEY-- I DIDN'T FAINT-- HE DID!
FIRE
LIBRARY
LATER
HENRY HAD A LITTLE TOO MUCH EXCITEMENT, GERALDINE, SO I THOUGHT--
OH, COME RIGHT IN I'VE GOT JUST THE THING
HERE, HENRY-- READ SOME OF THIS POETRY. IT'S RELAXING
ER--SURE, GERAL-DINE
UH .. "THOU GODDESS, SAGE AND HOLY, HAIL DIVINEST, MELAN-- MELANCHOLY--"
OH
STOP, HENRY!! YOU'RE MURDERING MILTON!
!?!
HUH?
THE LIFE OF MILTON
TH-THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE NAME OF MILTON THAT CAUSES HIM TO FAINT!
END

HENRY ALDRICH
:SIGH:
CATCHING COLD, GERALDINE?
:SNIFF:
REPULSIVE PICTURE
THE
Y-YOU'RE CRYING!
:SOB: LET'S GO, HENRY.
GEE WHIZ, GERALDINE--IF YOU DIDN'T LIKE THE PICTURE, YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO CRY ABOUT IT. WE COULD HAVE LEFT SOONER...
OH--NO, HENRY...
...I-I-I LOVE THE THE PICTURE... :SOB: IT--IT WAS WONDERFUL! :SOB:
???

OH--I GET IT! YOU LIKED THE PICTURE SO MUCH THAT YOU HATED TO SEE IT END--SO YOU BEGAN TO CRY...RIGHT?
WRONG...
...IT HAD TO END THERE! AFTER ALL, SHE WAS 96 YEARS OLD... AND IF THE PICTURE RAN ANY LONGER, SHE MIGHT HAVE...MIGHT HAVE... PASSED ON.
THEN WHY DID YOU CRY?
IT--IT WAS SO POIGNANT.. SO TOUCHING... SO... SO..
I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A SO-SO PICTURE MYSELF!
ICE CRE
HENRY... WHY DON'T YOU WRITE ME A LETTER?
SURE, GERALDINE...
.. A LETTER?? WHY. . ARE YOU GOING AWAY?
NO..
WELL, THEN IF I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, I CAN SAY IT RIGHT TO YOUR FACE. I DON'T HAVE TO WRITE.
B-BUT, HENRY--THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS A FELLOW WOULD LIKE TO SAY TO A GIRL, BUT HE HESITATES TO SAY THEM RIGHT TO HER FACE.
TODAY'S SPECIAL MUSTARD ICE CREAM
DRINK Gassy Cola
OH--THOSE THINGS? I CAN SAY THEM TO YOU OVER THE PHONE!
WHAT THINGS ARE YOU REFERRING TO?
TODAY'S SPECIAL MUSTARD
Menu

WELL.. THINGS LIKE...ER... THAT IS .. THINGS THAT I'D BE AFRAID TO SAY TO YOUR FACE... LIKE, FOR INSTANCE . "I DON'T CARE FOR THE WAY YOU'RE WEARING YOUR HAIR." .
AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WAY I WEAR MY HAIR?
SODAS
N-NOTHING. .
TYPICAL OF YOU, HENRY-- ALWAYS COMPLAINING OVER NOTHING!
I'M SORRY IF I SAID ANYTHING
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANOTHER WORD!
SODAS
B-BUT
NOT ANOTHER WORD!!
IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, WRITE ME A LETTER!
?
TWO CHOCOLATE SODAS, AND A SHEET OF WRITING PAPER AND PENCIL.
HENRY
YOU DON'T INTEND TO WRITE ME A LETTER HERE, DO YOU?
ER--D-DON'T I?

HENRY ALDRICH, YOU MISSED THE WHOLE POINT OF THAT PICTURE WE'VE JUST SEEN!
NO, I DIDN'T, GERALDINE! AT THE AGE OF 96, SHE WAS LEFT ALL ALONE WITH HER LETTERS
.. WITH HER LETTERS . . OH!
EXACTLY!
NOW I KNOW WHY YOU WANT ME TO WRITE YOU LETTERS!
YOU DO, HENRY?
NEVER MIND THE PAPER AND PENCIL I'VE GOT TIME TO WRITE HER WHEN SHE'S 96!
HENRY, WHEN I'M 96, I'LL WANT TO READ OLD LETTERS!
OH, MY MOTHER HAS LOADS OF OLD LETTERS THAT MY FATHER WROTE HER. I'LL LET YOU READ THOSE!
I'LL WANT TO READ OLD LETTERS .. WRITTEN BY YOU.. WHILE WE'RE STILL YOUNG, SO I CAN HAVE THEM TO LOOK BACK ON WHEN I'M OLD! IS THAT CLEAR?
Y-YES, GERALDINE.
CAN I PLEASE HAVE THAT WRITING PAPER NOW?
MMM... SHE'S 96 ALREADY, EH? BOY-- SHE'S SURE WELL-PRESERVED!

SHORTLY.
BUT, GERALDINE, I DON'T SEE WHY YOU DIDN'T LET ME WRITE THE LETTER IN THERE!
BECAUSE AN ICE-CREAM PARLOR IS HARDLY CONDUCIVE TO LETTER WRITING...
ICE
REAM
...ESPECIALLY THE KIND OF LETTERS I WANT YOU TO WRITE!
OH--IS THERE A SPECIAL KIND?
Beauty
Saloon
IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE KIND OF LETTERS I WANT YOU TO WRITE ME, I'M NOT GOING TO BE THE ONE TO TELL YOU!
THEN HOW AM I GOING TO FIND OUT?
ASK A MAN OF EXPERIENCE--ASK YOUR FATHER!
GEE WHIZ--THAT'S A GOOD IDEA, GERALDINE!
ONLY I WON'T HAVE TO ASK MY FATHER--I'LL JUST ASK MY MOTHER WHAT KIND OF LETTERS MY FATHER WROTE TO HER!
MOTHER--DO YOU REMEMBER THE KIND OF LETTERS FATHER USED TO WRITE YOU BEFORE YOU WERE MARRIED?
I CERTAINLY DO, HENRY...
. TERRIBLE ONES!
IS THAT THE KIND A GIRL LIKES TO RECEIVE?

NO, HENRY-- A GIRL LIKES TO GET ROMANTIC LOVE LETTERS.
HOW COME FATHER DIDN'T WRITE LETTERS LIKE THAT TO YOU?
BECAUSE YOUR FATHER WAS STUDYING LAW AT THE TIME... AND HE MADE EVERY LETTER SOUND LIKE A BUSINESS CONTRACT!
WELL...HE MEANT BUSINESS, DIDN'T HE, MOTHER?
TAKE MY ADVICE, HENRY, AND DON'T ASK YOUR FATHER'S ADVICE WHEN IT COMES TO WRITING A GIRL LETTERS!
ALL RIGHT, MOTHER.
I DON'T STOP TALKING WHEN I'M WITH GERALDINE, BUT I CAN'T SEEM TO THINK OF A THING TO SAY ON PAPER..
WAIT A MINUTE... MY SISTER MARY MUST RECEIVE THE KIND OF LETTERS THAT GERALDINE WOULD LIKE TO GET FROM ME!
HERE'S A LETTER THAT'S BEEN OPENED, AND IT'S ADDRESSED TO MARY. I WOULDN'T DARE READ IT, BUT IF I COULD PEEK AT THE END OF IT AND FIND OUT WHICH ONE OF HER BOY FRIENDS WROTE IT, I CAN ASK HIM FOR A FEW POINTERS.
HMPH.. WHAT A WAY FOR A FELLOW TO END A LETTER -- WITHOUT EVEN SIGNING HIS NAME
Dearest
Love
Lover Boy

HELLO, HENRY-- WRITING A LETTER TO SOMEONE?
HUH? OH-- YES, MARY...TO GERALDINE!
SHE'D NEVER BELIEVE I DIDN'T READ HER LETTER IF SHE CATCHES ME WITH IT...
I-I WAS JUST PUTTING IT IN AN ENVELOPE.
WELL, ADDRESS IT, AND I'LL MAIL IT FOR YOU. I'M GOING OUT NOW!
TH-THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, MARY. I'LL MAIL IT MYSELF LATER... TONIGHT TOMORROW . MAYBE...
THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH YOU BOYS...
...WE GIRLS SIT HOME WAITING FOR YOUR LETTERS AND YOU PUT OFF MAILING THEM! HERE-- ADDRESS IT!
O-OKAY, MARY.
HENRY, YOUR HAND IS SHAKING! ARE YOU NERVOUS?
Y-YES, MARY...
THIS IS THE FIRST LETTER I'VE EVER WRITTEN TO GERALDINE.
OH, HOW EXCITING!
AND I'LL BET YOU WROTE A DARLING LETTER!
I NOT ONLY DIDN'T WRITE IT... I DIDN'T EVEN READ IT!

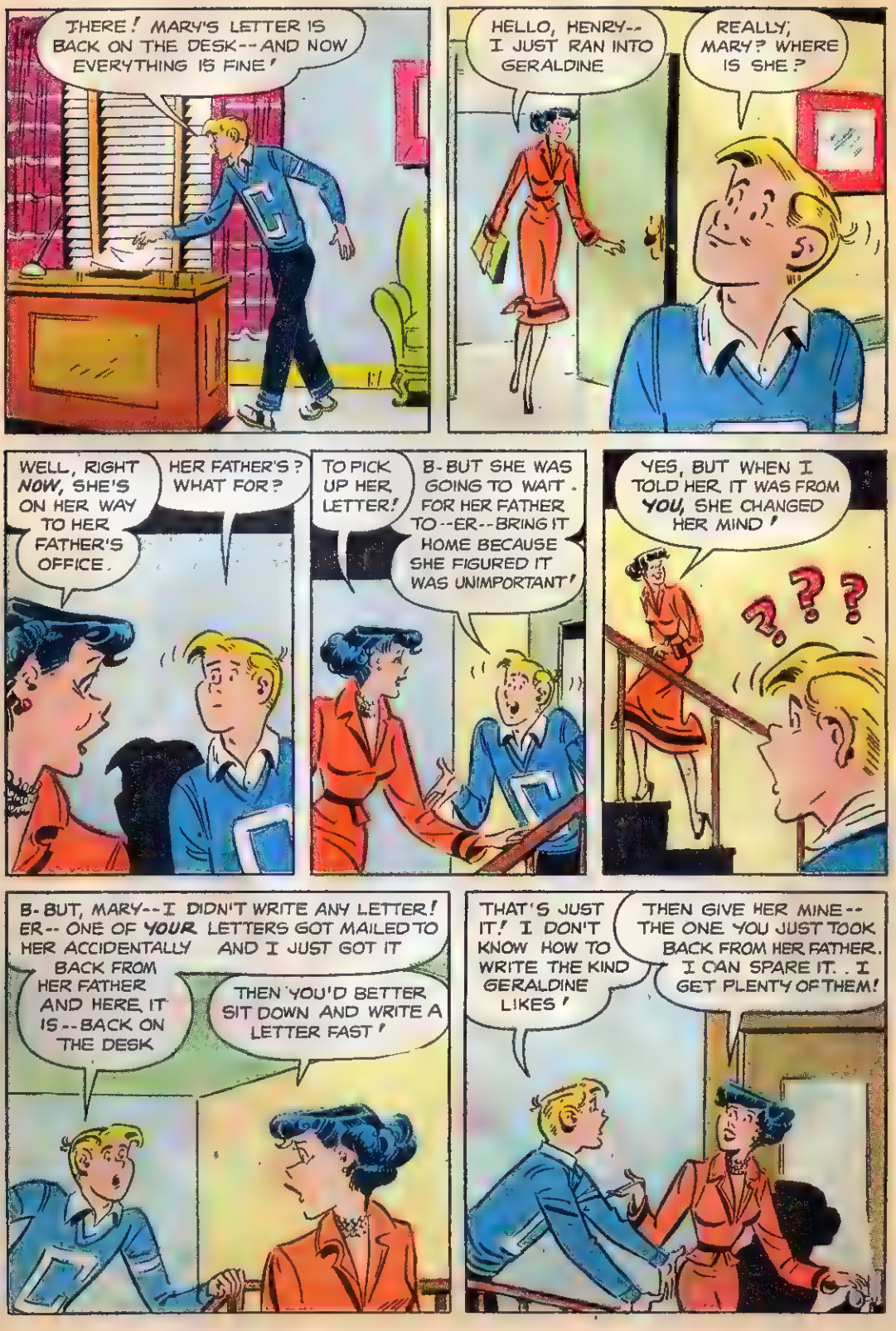
WELL, AT LEAST I'LL KNOW WHAT MAILBOX SHE'S PUTTING THE LETTER INTO...
I'LL JUST CHECK AND SEE WHEN THE MAIL IS GOING TO BE PICKED UP
U.S. MAIL
HMM... 8 O'CLOCK TONIGHT... I'D BETTER BE HERE AT 7:30 TO MAKE SURE.
PICKED UP
12:00 PM
8:00 PM
12:00 PM
THAT EVENING...
WHAT TIME IS IT, PLEASE?
YOUR FATHER JUST TOLD YOU THE TIME TEN MINUTES AGO, HENRY!
HAS IT BEEN TEN MINUTES ALREADY?
YES.
HE SAID IT WAS 7:20 THEN, DIDN'T HE?
THAT'S RIGHT.
S-SO IT MUST BE 7:30 NOW.
GOOD FOR YOU, HENRY...YOU CAN ADD!
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
HENRY!
WHIZ
GEE WHIZ -- IT LOOKS PRETTY DARK DOWN THERE. I HOPE THE MAIL HASN'T ALREADY BEEN PICKED UP!

A HALF-HOUR LATER...
CAN I DISTURB YOU, SONNY?
HUH? OH, YOU SURE CAN! YOU'RE JUST THE MAIL-MAN I WANT TO SEE!
US MAIL
YOU'LL COME ACROSS A LETTER I WROTE... I MEAN, I ADDRESSED TO MISS GERALDINE LOVE. ER...I'D LIKE TO HAVE IT BACK, PLEASE.
THAT'S AGAINST POSTAL REGULATIONS.
LETTERS
B-BUT SHE'S MY GIRL AND--
I'M SORRY, SONNY.
RAIN, NOR SNOW, NOR SLEET, NOR YOU.
MAIL
...CAN STOP THE MAIL FROM GOING THROUGH!
!?!!
NEXT MORNING
HENRY DIDN'T FINISH HIS DINNER LAST NIGHT, HE MUST BE STARVED!
I'LL SAY! LOOK AT HIM COME!
AND LOOK AT HIM GO!

GEE WHIZ, THERE GOES THE MAILMAN UP TO GERALDINE'S NOW!
IF I CUT ACROSS THE LAWN..
GOOD MORNING, MR. SMITH!
OH, HELLO, HENRY.
I'M GOING TO CALL FOR GERALDINE TO WALK HER TO SCHOOL, SO I'LL TAKE THE MAIL IN.
FINE, HENRY.
THAT'S FUNNY-- IT'S NOT HERE.
HELLO, HENRY-- ANY-THING FOR ME?
OH-- IT'S ALL FOR YOU, MR LOVE.
OH, MR. LOVE-- HERE'S A LETTER FOR GERALDINE I HAD TROUBLE FIGURING OUT THE HAND-WRITING.
OH, THANK YOU
YOU'RE CALLING FOR GERALDINE, HENRY-- WOULD YOU MIND GIVING HER THIS LETTER?
OH, I'LL BE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO TAKE CARE OF IT, MR LOVE!

WELL, THAT'S THE END OF THAT!!
RING
GOOD MORNING, GERALDINE!
DID YOU WRITE ME A LETTER, HENRY?
WELL, YOU SEE--
OH, GERALDINE!
YES, MR. SMITH?
YOU'D BETTER TELL YOUR FRIENDS TO ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO YOU A LITTLE MORE CLEARLY. YOU ALMOST DIDN'T GET YOUR LETTER THIS MORNING!
WHERE IS IT NOW?
I GAVE IT TO YOUR FATHER!
OH, HENRY! YOU DID WRITE ME A LETTER!
ER--
MY FATHER MUST HAVE PUT IT IN HIS POCKET WITH HIS MAIL. I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU WROTE!
B-BUT I DIDN'T WRITE YOU A LETTER, GERALDINE!
YOU DIDN'T? THEN WHO COULD THE LETTER BE FROM?
AS LONG AS YOU KNOW IT'S NOT FROM ME, WHY SHOULD YOU EVEN CARE, GERALDINE?

I'M JUST CURIOUS, HENRY. IT'S PROBABLY UNIMPORTANT, SO I'LL WAIT UNTIL MY FATHER BRINGS IT HOME TONIGHT.
ER--THAT REMINDS ME, GERALDINE, I HAVE TO GO SOMEWHERE RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL, SO DON'T WAIT FOR ME.
AFTER SCHOOL...
I'LL JUST EXPLAIN THE WHOLE THING TO GERALDINE'S FATHER!
MOMENTS LATER...
...AND SO EVERYTHING WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE, MR. LOVE, IF THE MAILMAN HADN'T TOLD GERALDINE THAT HE GAVE YOU A LETTER FROM HER
HMM
WELL SUPPOSE I TELL GERALDINE IT WAS JUST AN ADVERTISEMENT OF SOME SORT AND I HAD MISPLACED IT!
W-WOULD YOU?
CERTAINLY, MY BOY! NOW RUN ALONG AND FORGET THE WHOLE MATTER!
GEE WHIZ--YOU'RE SWELL! IT'S A CINCH THAT GERALDINE TAKES AFTER YOU..
..AND NOT MRS LOVE!
??
NOW I'LL RUN HOME AND PUT MARY'S LETTER BACK!


THERE! MARY'S LETTER IS BACK ON THE DESK--AND NOW EVERYTHING IS FINE!
HELLO, HENRY-- I JUST RAN INTO GERALDINE
REALLY, MARY? WHERE IS SHE?
WELL, RIGHT NOW, SHE'S ON HER WAY TO HER FATHER'S OFFICE.
HER FATHER'S? WHAT FOR?
TO PICK UP HER LETTER!
B-BUT SHE WAS GOING TO WAIT . FOR HER FATHER TO--ER--BRING IT HOME BECAUSE SHE FIGURED IT WAS UNIMPORTANT!
YES, BUT WHEN I TOLD HER IT WAS FROM YOU, SHE CHANGED HER MIND!
B-BUT, MARY--I DIDN'T WRITE ANY LETTER! ER-- ONE OF YOUR LETTERS GOT MAILED TO HER ACCIDENTALLY AND I JUST GOT IT BACK FROM HER FATHER AND HERE IT IS--BACK ON THE DESK
THEN YOU'D BETTER SIT DOWN AND WRITE A LETTER FAST!
THAT'S JUST IT! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO WRITE THE KIND GERALDINE LIKES!
THEN GIVE HER MINE-- THE ONE YOU JUST TOOK BACK FROM HER FATHER. I CAN SPARE IT. I GET PLENTY OF THEM!

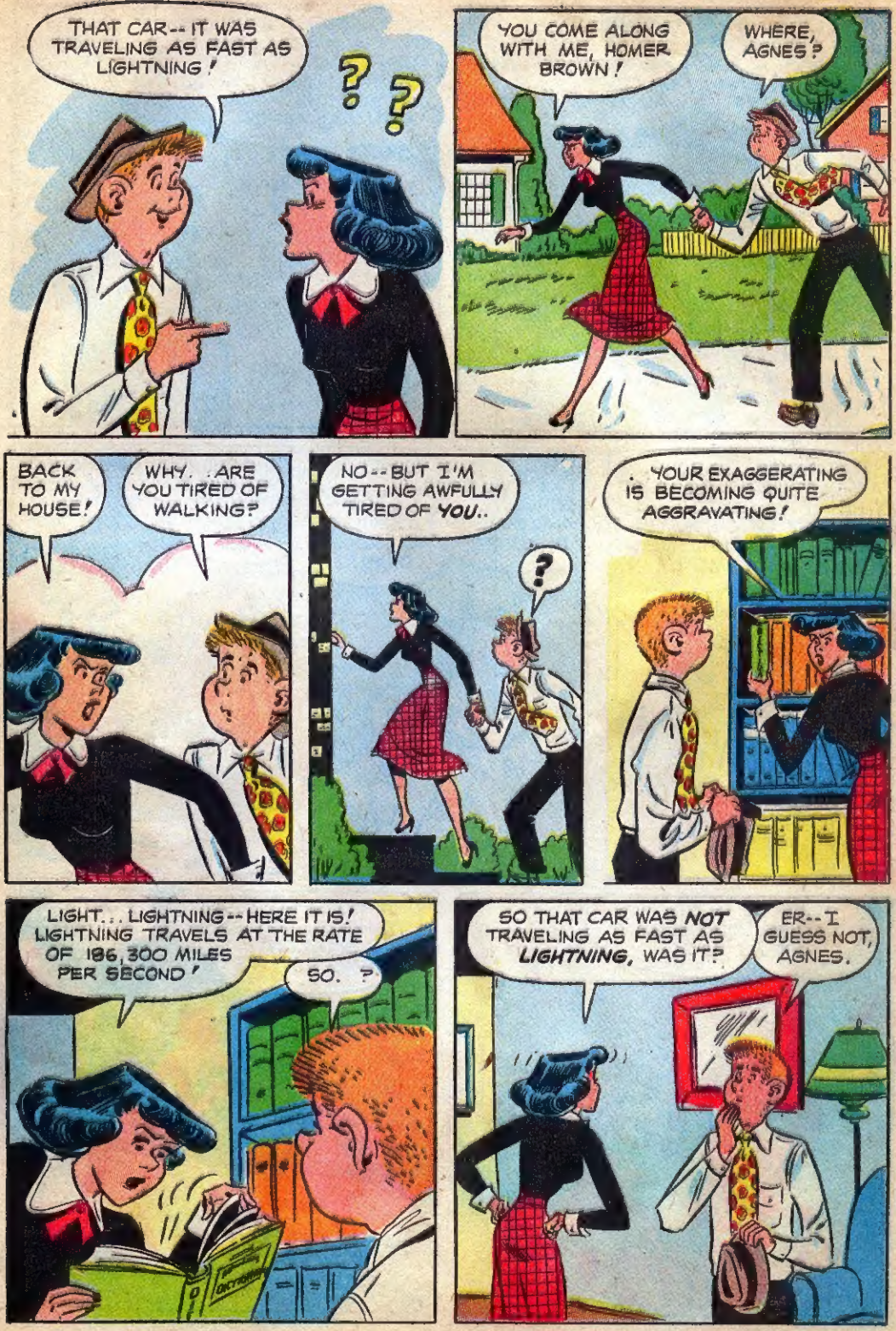
THANKS, MARY!
TAXI!
HURRY, DRIVER-- PLEASE HURRY!
METER
MR LOVE, H-HAS GERALDINE BEEN HERE YET?
NO
W-WELL, SHE'LL B-BE HERE ANY MINUTE-- S-SO GIVE HER THIS L-LETTER.
I WISH YOU'D MAKE UP YOUR MIND, HENRY!
OH, HENRY! YOU CAME UP HERE TO GET THE LETTER FOR ME--HOW NICE!
ER--Y-YES, GERALDINE... HERE IT IS!
HENRY, I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU WEREN'T ANXIOUS FOR ME TO READ YOUR LETTER! IT-IT'S BEAUTIFULLY WRITTEN! I'LL CHERISH IT ALWAYS!!
IT--IT WAS JUST SOMETHING I DASHED OFF, GERALDINE!
YOU'RE SO POETIC, HENRY.. I JUST MUST KISS YOU RIGHT HERE AND NOW!
HELP YOURSELF, GERALDINE!
SMACK!
THE END

HOMER
WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR A WALK, HAH, AGNES?
IT SURE IS, HOMER .. AND I ENJOY WALKING.
I DO, TOO, AGNES.
THEN WHY ARE YOU STOPPING?
THAT'S WILLY'S HOUSE
WELL, YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO STOP TO TELL ME; HOMER .
YOU COULD'VE JUST POINTED IT OUT AND MENTIONED IT AS WE PASSED BY. NOW, COME ON, HOMER LET'S CONTINUE OUR WALK.
BUT I WANT TO DROP IN FOR A SECOND AND TELL WILLY SOMETHING.
CAN'T YOU TELL HIM LATER, HOMER... ON YOUR TIME? RIGHT NOW IT'S OUR TIME TO GO WALKING!
BUT IT WON'T TAKE ANY TIME AT ALL, AGNES.

SUPPOSE YOU WAIT FOR ME RIGHT HERE--AND I'LL RUN IN AND OUT.
WELL, ALL RIGHT, HOMER--
--BUT DON'T YOU DARE KEEP ME WAITING LONG!
I'LL BE BACK BEFORE YOU CAN TURN AROUND!
?
THERE, I TURNED AROUND. NOW, WHERE'S HOMER?
HMPH I'LL BET I COULD TURN AROUND THREE TIMES BEFORE HE COMES BACK!
TWO.. THREE.

HE'S STILL NOT BACK! I'LL JUST SEE HOW MANY TURNS HE KEEPS ME WAITING.
...FOUR... FIVE...
...TEN... ELEVEN...
...SEVENTY-ONE.. SEVENTY-TWO.
YOU'LL HAVE TO GET IN LINE... I'M FIRST!
I'M SECOND.
OH--
LOOK--THE MERRY-GO-ROUND BROKE DOWN!
AW!
WE MIGHT AS WELL LEAVE.
YEAH...
HERE I AM, AGNES. WHAT ARE YOU DOING . PLAYING WITH THE KIDS?
I WAS NOT PLAYING, HOMER. I GOT DIZZY AND FELL!
GEE WHIZ-- WHAT MADE YOU DIZZY?

TURNING AROUND AND AROUND MADE ME DIZZY...
HUH?
...AND IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, HOMER BROWN!
MY FAULT?
YES! YOU TOLD ME YOU'D BE BACK BEFORE I COULD TURN AROUND, DIDN'T YOU?
YES, BUT..
WELL, I WANTED TO SEE HOW MANY TIMES I COULD TURN AROUND BEFORE YOU CAME BACK.
?
...AND I TURNED AROUND SEVENTY-TWO TIMES... WHICH IS SEVENTY-ONE TIMES MORE THAN YOU SAID YOU'D BE GONE!
B-BUT, AGNES! I DIDN'T MEAN EXACTLY--
WELL, NEXT TIME SAY EXACTLY WHAT YOU MEAN! NOW LET'S CONTINUE OUR WALK.
THANKS FOR FORGIVING ME, AGNES!
WOW! DID YOU SEE THAT?
WHAT?
WHIZZ


THAT CAR -- IT WAS TRAVELING AS FAST AS LIGHTNING!
? ?
YOU COME ALONG WITH ME, HOMER BROWN!
WHERE, AGNES?
BACK TO MY HOUSE!
WHY. . ARE YOU TIRED OF WALKING?
NO -- BUT I'M GETTING AWFULLY TIRED OF YOU..
?
. YOUR EXAGGERATING IS BECOMING QUITE AGGRAVATING!
LIGHT. . . LIGHTNING -- HERE IT IS! LIGHTNING TRAVELS AT THE RATE OF 186,300 MILES PER SECOND'
SO. ?
SO THAT CAR WAS NOT TRAVELING AS FAST AS LIGHTNING, WAS IT?
ER -- I GUESS NOT, AGNES.

B-BUT THAT'S JUST A FIGURE OF SPEECH, AGNES! I DIDN'T MEAN IT LITERALLY!
I WARNED YOU BEFORE, HOMER-- SAY WHAT YOU MEAN-- OR DON'T SAY ANYTHING!
OKAY, AGNES! FROM NOW ON, I'LL SAY ONLY WHAT I MEAN. AND I MEAN IT WHEN I SAY I'D LOVE TO CONTINUE THE WALK WITH YOU, AGNES.
DO YOU REALLY MEAN THAT, HOMER?
SURE, AGNES... AND I ALSO MEAN IT WHEN I SAY YOU'RE THE SWELLEST GIRL I KNOW!
OH, HOMER, TELL ME MORE!
WELL, I THINK YOU'RE THE PRETTIEST GIRL IN SCHOOL... AND I MEAN IT, AGNES!
OH-- I BELIEVE YOU, HOMER DEAR!
AND THERE'S NOTHING I WOULDN'T DO FOR YOU!
OH, HOMER-- I'LL BET YOU MEAN THAT, TOO!
I CERTAINLY DO! WHY I'D GIVE YOU THE SHIRT OFF MY BACK!
??
IF YOU DIDN'T MEAN IT, HOMER, YOU SIMPLY SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID IT!
B-BUT, AGNES--
?!
THE END

(Continued from inside front cover)

don't we wait here for . . ."

"Hen-ry . . ." Homer interrupted sternly.

So Dan Cupid set off reluctantly toward the bright lights of the boulevard. Feeling considerably more than self-conscious in his costume, he slunk along as much as possible in the shadows. A car came by, caught him in the headlights, and began to slow down. Henry waved excitedly for it to stop. But when the driver came close enough to get a good look, he changed his mind, swerved and sped off down the road. Two other cars behaved in the same way.

He decided to try Joe's Diner. Sneaking up through the trees and hedges, he peeked into its brightly lit interior. There was Joe joking with a couple of truckmen and a cab driver. Henry didn't have the courage to walk into that audience, so he slipped quietly into the back seat of the taxi and huddled down to wait for the driver to come out.

Suddenly, he was blinded by a bright light shining through the window. A strong grip hauled him bodily out of the taxi.

It was a policeman from a patrol car. "Hey, Mike, what do we have here?" he snapped. "It must be 'The Cat.' "

"Yeah, Bill, it's 'The Cat' all right! He's been burglarizin' this neighborhood for weeks!"

"Wait," Henry protested, "you're wrong. I'm no cat. I'm a cupid . . . I mean-a-Henry Aldrich. And I'm on my way to a party!"

"Is that the way you get there, sneaking around in the dark, dressed up like a devil?"

"Cupid," corrected Henry.

"Well, Devil, Cat, or Cupid, we've been watching you and you've been behavin' most suspiciously."

"My friend can identify me," Henry cried.

But when they returned to the car, Homer was gone. The King of Hearts had gone out for help himself.

"And look here, Mike," said the policeman. "This fellow says his name is Aldrich, but his car is registered to Brown."

"Yeah, come along, son," Mike said, "you've got some explaining to do!"

Luckily, the sergeant at the desk remembered Henry from an unfortunate misunderstanding earlier that winter and he was soon released. A telephone call to Geraldine informed him that the King of Hearts, with the help of two truck drivers and a cabbie, had gotten the car out of the snowbank and was, at the moment, waiting with his Queen in the living room.

"Great," said Henry, "you can all pick me up down here at the . . . er, police station."

So everything turned out all right. Well, except that Geraldine didn't approve Henry's variations on the costume *at all*. In fact, she became quite upset. She agreed to continue on to the dance only when it was pointed out to her that the funnier Henry looked, the more beautiful she appeared in contrast.

Needless to say, it was a very successful dance.

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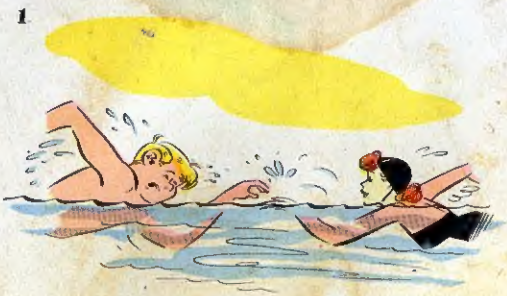

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